

Tuning Fork Fremitus

A New Method for Evaluation of the Chest

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A DISADVANTAGE OF AUSCULTATION or palpation of the chest for variations in fremitus while the patient repeatedly says "ninety-nine" is that the tonal quality of the voice is inconstant.

This factor is overcome by a method that I have used for the past three years: A 256 cycles per second tuning fork is struck vigorously with a plexor, then the stem of the fork is pressed against the body of the sternum with one hand while the other is used to hold the stethoscope for auscultation of the apices and the lateral and posterior walls of the chest. A standardized musical tone is trans-

mitted through the chest with considerably greater fidelity than the patient's vocal sounds, and in my experience the observations made by this method have correlated well with subsequent radiological examinations.

It has been particularly useful in diagnosis as well as in following the progress of re-inflation of the lung in pneumothorax. Once one has gained experience with this method—"sound adapted" one's ears—he can readily discern areas of consolidation, intrathoracic masses, fluid levels, emphysema, and the like.

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Submitted January 21, 1963.

